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The Pembroke Booklets

(First Series)

v

Robert Southwell

Selected Poems

Henry Constable

Pastorals and Sonnets

William Drummond

Songs, Sonnets, etc.



J. R. Tutin

Hull

1906

Large Paper Edition, limited to 250 copies

Robert Southwell

(1561?-1595)

'So [I] had written that piece of his, The Burning Babe, [I] would have been content to destroy many of [mine]."—BEN JONSON to WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

Henry Constable

(1562-1613)

"Constable's ambrosiac muse."—BEN JONSON.

"Sweet Constable doth take the wond'ring ear
And lays it up in willing prisonment."
—*The Return from Parnassus.*

William Drummond

(1585-1649)

"The sweetest names, and which carry a perfume in the mention, are, Kit Marlowe, Drayton, DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN, and Cowley."

—CHARLES LAMB: *Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading.*

"Drummond . . . may almost be looked upon as the harbinger of a fresh outburst of word-music" . . .—GEO. MACDONALD.

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Preface

THE three poets brought together in this booklet were all born within one quarter of a century, and their work represents much that is most characteristic of one of the richest periods in our poetical history. The earliest of them was born two or three years before the birth of Shakespeare, the latest of them died in the year in which Lovelace's "Lucasta" was first published. The first two—and the two of the trio least well-remembered—have this in common, that they were both of them Roman Catholics in days when their native country was little tolerant of such. Each was a man of true poetic feeling and gifts, who is perhaps only partly remembered because he was but a lesser light more or less dimmed by the brilliant galaxy in which he was set. This is not the place for a close examination of their writings, a comparison of their methods, a balancing of their relative positions in our literary hierarchy; here we have but a handful of blossoms gathered from three gardens of poesy, at a time when it could most truly be said that all could grow the flower for all had got the seed. A brief note of the position that each held in his time will form perhaps the most appropriate preface.

I

ROBERT SOUTHWELL (1561?-1595), who is best known, by those who know him at all, as the writer of that beautifully fanciful devout lyric, "The Burning Babe," was the son of Richard Southwell of Horsham St. Faith's in Norfolk, and it is interesting to recall that his maternal ancestry gave him descent from that Sussex family from which there also descended in Percy Bysshe Shelley a later poet of a very different stamp.

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Educated at the Jesuit College at Douay, Southwell was at an early age incited with a desire to become a Jesuit, and in 1580 he was admitted to his first vows. At Rome he took holy orders, and at about the age of five and twenty undertook the dangerous enterprise of removal to England at a time when the penal laws against his co-religionists were fatally severe. For a few years he lay *perdu*, officiating for his fellow Catholics in secret, "helping and gaining souls," and writing to Rome of the posture of affairs in the country given over so strongly to the enemy. Despite all his disguises, his earnestness in mastering such topics of conversation as should tend to remove suspicion of his real character and leave him free to the exercise of his faith, Southwell was captured in 1592. Thanks to Elizabethan law the very presence of a Jesuit in this country was a matter of treason, and on that charge he was tried, condemned, and in February 1595 was hanged at Tyburn.

When at Rome Southwell was known to write much, both poetry and prose, but it was not until shortly after his death that his first poems were published, and then of course without any name being attached to them. They were at once popular with many readers and were reprinted not only in London, but also—with their author's initials—at Douay. His writings were such as to suggest the zealot marked out for martyrdom; not only are they devoted to religious themes, but the author explicitly deprecated the giving over of poetry to amorous, worldly and secular matters,—he even went the length of taking a known poem of the latter character and rewriting it as a devotional one to show how easily and effectively the muse might be made to serve the cause of religion. Southwell's work had a distinct effect on several of the smaller writers of the great age, and perhaps we may even trace it in the more remarkable work of his successor Donne. Ben Jonson, writing to the third of the poets represented in this booklet, declared that could he have claimed "The Burning Babe" as his own he would have been content to destroy much that he had written. That poem

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is indeed like a bit of Blake written a couple of centuries before the time of that mystic.

II

HENRY CONSTABLE (1562-1613) was a son of Sir Robert Constable of Newark. At the age of sixteen he matriculated at St John's College, Cambridge, and early in life, despite his Protestant upbringing, became a Roman Catholic ; as such England—as we saw in the case of his contemporary Southwell—was no safe place for him. He went to France and remained there many years. His religion was not apparently of the zealous character of his fellow poet's, for not only did he not devote his poetic talent entirely to religious themes, but he was in correspondence with the English Court seemingly in the capacity of spy. He returned to England on the accession of James without having secured the essential permit to do so, and was shortly afterwards taken and put in the Tower where he remained presumably for about a year. He died at Liège in October 1613.

Constable enjoyed considerable popularity as poet in his day. He wrote much in the sonnet form widely practised by writers of his time—indeed he shares with Sidney the honour of being first introducer into this country of the Italian sonnet form. The first book of his of which we have record is his sonnet sequence “Diana” (1592), whilst he further wrote—as if to show that his muse was not entirely given over to worldly matters—a series of “Spiritual Sonnets.” The best that he wrote in this form is excellent indeed, as will be seen herein ; though in many of the poems he echoes the conceits which were among the commonest poetical “properties” of the period, at times he could strike a deeper note. In his pastoral poems he appears in a more individual style, while his pieces of this character are marked by the ease and grace characteristic of the best lyrical poetry of the day. One of these pastorals, “The Shepherd's Song of Venus and Adonis,” has, apart from its inherent interest, a special value as being, according to some authorities,

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the poem which suggested to Shakespeare his greater poem on the same theme. That Constable, whatever might be his difficulties with the authorities over his religious differences, was popular as a poet is sufficiently shown by the references to him in contemporary literature. In "The Return from Parnassus," written at about the time that the poet made his unauthorised return from the Continent, for example, Constable stands second upon the list of eleven poets, "good men and true," whom Ingenioso asks Judicio to "censure." Judicio deals briefly but pointedly and punningly with Constable—

"Sweet Constable doth take the wondering ear,
And lays it up in willing prisonment."

III

WILLIAM DRUMMOND of Hawthornden (1585-1649) was a more voluminous writer than either of those with whom he is here associated, and he is also a writer more frequently represented in the anthologies. He was the eldest son of John Drummond, laird of Hawthornden, a few miles from Edinburgh. The poet was educated at Edinburgh High School and University, and in 1606 when *en route* for the Continent to study law he paid his first visit to London. After passing two or three years studying in France he in 1609 returned to Scotland, paying his second visit to London in the following year. On his return home after that visit he became laird of Hawthornden by his father's death, and thenceforward rarely left the place with which his name is now ever wedded. His first poem, an elegy on the death of Prince Henry, was published in 1613. In the following year he married, but his wife did not long survive, and in 1616 he published a volume of poems inspired by his love for her and his grief at her early loss. Drummond had many friends and correspondents in London, and in 1618 Ben Jonson walked thence to Edinburgh, and there made the Scots poet's acquaintance, staying with him for two or three

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weeks. A pleasant story which one would like to think true has it that the walk was undertaken simply with the object of becoming acquainted with his fellow poet. In 1626 we find Drummond in something of an unexpected light seeking to patent a number of mechanical inventions mostly connected with military science. In 1632 he married again. Marriage and mechanics had not however altogether supplanted the muse, for in 1633 he furnished the poems and speeches called for by Charles the First's Edinburgh Coronation. The execution of the king is said to have hastened Drummond's death ; he died at Hawthornden on April 4th, 1649.

Drummond's poetry, it has sometimes been objected, is the poetry of a learned rather than of an inspired writer ; but in some of his sonnets, and frequently in his songs and madrigals, he has a spontaneity, and a lyric sweetness which are likely long to delight all who care for poetry.

WALTER JERROLD.

Robert Southwell

[In preparing the Southwell text I have been enabled to correct many long-standing misprints by reference to Dr Grosart's edition of Southwell's Poems in the *Fuller Worthies Library*: the best edition of Southwell hitherto printed.—J.R.T.]

The Burning Babe

As I in hoary Winter's night
 Stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat,
 Which made my heart to glow ;
And lifting up a fearful eye
 To view what fire was near,
A pretty Babe, all burning bright,
 Did in the air appear,
Who, scorched with excessive heat,
 Such floods of tears did shed,
As though His floods should quench His flames
 Which with His tears were fed.
Alas," quoth He, "but newly born,
 In fiery heats I fry ;
Yet none approach to warm their hearts
 Or feel My fire but I.
My faultless breast the furnace is,
 The fuel, wounding thorns,
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke,
 The ashes, shame and scorns.
The fuel Justice layeth on,
 And Mercy blows the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought
 Are men's defiled souls,

Robert Southwell

For which, as now on fire I am
To work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath
To wash them in My blood.”
With this He vanished out of sight,
And swiftly shrunk away ;
And straight I callèd unto mind
That it was Christmas day.

A Child my Choice

LET folly praise that fancy loves, I praise and love
that Child
Whose heart no thought, Whose tongue no word,
Whose hand no deed defiled.
I praise Him most, I love Him best, all praise and
love is His ;
While Him I love, in Him I live, and cannot live
amiss.
Love's sweetest mark, laud's highest theme, man's
most desired light,
To love Him life, to leave Him death, to live in Him
delight.
He mine by gift, I His by debt, thus each to other due,
First friend He was, best friend He is, all times will
try Him true.
Though young, yet wise, though small, yet strong ;
though man, yet GOD He is ;
As wise He knows, as strong He can, as GOD He loves
to bliss.
His knowledge rules, His strength defends, His love
doth cherish all ;
His birth our joy, His life our light, His death our end
of thrall.
Alas ! He weeps, He sighs, He pants, yet do His
angels sing ;
Out of His tears, His sighs and throbs, doth bud a
joyful spring.

Robert Southwell

Almighty Babe ! Whose tender arms can force all
foes to fly,
Correct my faults, protect my life, direct me when I
die.

Man's Civil War

My hovering thoughts would fly to heaven,
And quiet nestle in the sky ;
Fain would my ship in Virtue's shore
Without remove at anchor lie.

But mounting thoughts are haulèd down
With heavy poise of mortal load ;
And blust'ring storms deny my ship
In Virtue's haven secure abode.

When inward eye to heavenly sights
Doth draw my longing heart's desire,
The world with jesses of delights
Would to her perch my thoughts retire.

Fond Fancy trains to Pleasure's lure,
Though Reason stiffly do repine ;
Though Wisdom woo me to the saint,
Yet Sense would win me to the shrine.

Where Reason loathes, there Fancy loves,
And overrules the captive will ;
Foes senses are to Virtue's lore,
They draw the wit their wish to fill.

Need craves consent of soul to sense,
Yet divers bents breed civil fray ;
Hard hap where halves must disagree,
Or truce of halves the whole betray !

Robert Southwell

O cruel fight ! where fighting friend
With love doth kill a favouring foe,
Where peace with sense is war with God,
And self-delight the seed of woe !

Dame Pleasure's drugs are steeped in sin,
Their sugared taste doth breed annoy ;
O fickle sense ! beware her gin,
Sell not thy soul to brittle joy !

Scorn not the Least

WHERE words are weak and foes encount'ring strong,
Where mightier do assault than do defend,
The feebler part puts up enforced wrong,
And silent sees that speech could not amend.
Yet higher powers must think, though they repine,
When sun is set, the little stars will shine.

While pike doth range the silly tench doth fly,
And crouch in privy creeks with smaller fish ;
Yet pikes are caught when little fish go by,
These fleet afloat while those do fill the dish.
There is a time even for the worm to creep,
And suck the dew while all her foes do sleep.

The merlin cannot ever soar on high,
Nor greedy greyhound still pursue the chase ;
The tender lark will find a time to fly,
And fearful hare to run a quiet race :
He that high growth on cedars did bestow,
Gave also lowly mushrooms leave to grow.

In Aman's pomp poor Mardocheus wept,
Yet God did turn his fate upon his foe ;
The lazar pined while Dives' feast was kept,
Yet he to heaven, to hell did Dives go.
We trample grass, and prize the flowers of May,
Yet grass is green when flowers do fade away.

Robert Southwell

Look Home

RETIRÈD thoughts enjoy their own delights,
As beauty doth in self-beholding eye ;
Man's mind a mirror is of heavenly sights,
A brief wherein all marvels summèd lie,
Of fairest forms and sweetest shapes the store,
Most graceful all, yet thought may grace them more.

The mind a creature is, yet can create,
To Nature's patterns adding higher skill ;
Of finest works wit better could the state
If force of wit had equal power of will :
Device of man in working hath no end ;
What thought can think another thought can mend.

Man's soul of endless beauties image is,
Drawn by the work of endless skill and might ;
This skilful might gave many sparks of bliss,
And to discern this bliss, a native light ;
To frame God's image as His worth required
His might, His skill, His word and will conspired.

All that he had His image should present,
All that it should present he could afford,
To that he could afford his will was bent,
His will was followed with performing word ;
Let this suffice, by this conceive the rest,—
He should, he could, he would, he did the best.

Times go by Turns

THE loppèd tree in time may grow again,
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower ;
The sorriest wight may find release of pain,
The driest soil suck in some moist'ning shower ;
Times go by turns, and chances change by course,
From foul to fair, from better hap to worse.

Robert Southwell

The sea of Fortune doth not ever flow,
She draws her favours to the lowest ebb ;
Her tide hath equal times to come and go,
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest web ;
No joy so great but runneth to an end,
No hap so hard but may in fine amend.

Not always fall of leaf nor ever spring,
No endless night, yet not eternal day ;
The saddest birds a season find to sing,
The roughest storm a calm may soon allay :
Thus with succeeding turns God tempereth all,
That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

A chance may win that by mischance was lost ;
The net that holds no great, takes little fish ;
In some things all, in all things none are cross'd,
Few all they need, but none have all they wish ;
Unmingled joys here to no man befall :
Who least, hath some ; who most, hath never all.

Love's Servile Lot

LOVE mistress is of many minds
Yet few know whom they serve ;
They reckon least how little Love
Their service doth deserve.

The will she robbeth from the wit,
The sense from reason's lore ;
She is delightful in the rind,
Corrupted in the core.

She shroudeth Vice in Virtue's veil ;
Pretending good in ill ;
She off'reth joy, affordeth grief,
A Kiss, where she doth kill.

Robert Southwell

A honey-shower rains from her lips,
Sweet lights shine in her face ;
She hath the blush of virgin mind,
The mind of viper's race.

She makes thee seek, yet fear to find ;
To find but not enjoy ;
In many frowns some gliding smiles
She yields, to more annoy.

She woos thee to come near her fire,
Yet doth she draw it from thee ;
Far off she makes thy heart to fry,
And yet to freeze within thee.

She letteth fall some luring baits
For fools to gather up ;
Too sweet, too sour, to every taste
She tempereth her cup.

Soft souls she binds in tender twist,
Small flies in spinner's web,
She sets afloat some luring streams,
But makes them soon to ebb.

Her wat'ry eyes have burning force ;
Her floods and flames conspire ;
Tears kindle sparks, sobs fuel are,
And sighs do blow her fire.

May never was the month of love,
For May is full of flowers,
But rather April, wet by kind,
For love is full of showers.

Like tyrant, cruel wounds she gives,
Like surgeon, salve she lends ;
But salve and sore have equal force,
For death is both their ends.

Robert Southwell

With soothing words enthralled souls
She chains in servile bands ;
Her eye in silence hath a speech
Which eye best understands.

Her little sweet hath many sours ;
Short hap immortal harms ;
Her loving looks are murd'ring darts,
Her songs bewitching charms.

Like Winter rose and Summer ice
Her joys are still untimely ;
Before her Hope, behind Remorse :
Fair first, in fine unseemly.

Moods, passions, fancies, jealous fits,
Attend upon her train ;
She yieldeth rest without repose,
And heaven in hellish pain.

Her house is Sloth, her door Deceit,
And slippery Hope her stairs ;
Unbashful boldness bids her guests,
And every vice repairs.

Her diet is of such delights
As please till they be past ;
But then the poison kills the heart
That did entice the taste.

Her sleep in sin doth end in wrath,
Remorse rings her awake ;
Death calls her up, Shame drives her out,
Despairs her upshot make.

Plow not the seas, sow not the sands,
Leave off your idle pain ;
Seek other mistress for your minds,
Love's service is in vain.

Robert Southwell

Content and Rich

I DWELL in Grace's court,
Enriched with Virtue's rights ;
Faith guides my wit ; Love leads my will,
Hope all my mind delights.

In lowly vales I mount
To Pleasure's highest pitch ;
My silly shroud true honours brings,
My poor estate is rich.

My conscience is my crown,
Contented thoughts my rest ;
My heart is happy in itself,
My bliss is in my breast.

Enough I reckon wealth ;
A mean the surest lot,
That lies too high for base contempt,
Too low for envy's shot.

My wishes are but few,
All easy to fulfil,
I make the limits of my poure
The bounds unto my will.

I have no hopes but one,
Which is of heavenly reign :
Effects attained, or not desired,
All lower hopes refrain.

I feel no care of coin,
Well-doing is my wealth :
My mind to me an empire is
While grace affordeth health

Robert Southwell

I clip high-climbing thoughts,
The wings of swelling pride :
Their fall is worst, that from the height
Of greatest honours slide.

Sith sails of largest size
The storm doth soonest tear :
I bear so low and small a sail
As freeth me from fear.

I wrestle not with rage
While Fury's flame doth burn ;
It is in vain to stop the stream
Until the tide do turn.

But when the flame is out,
And ebbing wrath doth end,
I turn a late enraged foe
Into a quiet friend ;

And, taught with often proof,
A tempered calm I find
To be most solace to itself,
Best cure for angry mind.

Spare diet is my fare,
My clothes more fit than fine :
I know I feed and clothe a foe
That pampered would repine.

I envy not their hap
Whom favour doth advance :
I take no pleasure in their pain
That have less happy chance.

To rise by others' fall
I deem a losing gain ;
All states with others' ruins built,
To ruin run amain.

Robert Southwell

No change of Fortune's calms
Can cast my comforts down ;
When Fortune smiles, I smile to think
How quickly she will frown ;

And when in froward mood
She proves an angry foe,
Small gain I found to let her come,
Less loss to let her go.

A Vale of Tears

A VALE there is, enwrapped with dismal shades,
Which, thick with mournful pines, shrouds from the
sun ;

Where hanging cliffs yield short and dumpish glades,
And snowy flood with broken streams doth run :

Where eye-roam is from rocks to cloudy sky,
From thence to dales with stony ruins strowed,
Then to the crushed water's frothy fry,
Which tumbleth from the tops where snow is thawed.

Where ears of other sound can have no choice,
But various blustering of the stubborn wind
In trees, in caves, in straits with divers noise,
Which now doth hiss, now howl, now roar by kind :

Where waters wrestle with encountering stones
That break their streams and turn them into foam ;
The hollow clouds, full fraught with thundering groans,
With hideous thumps discharge their pregnant
womb.

And in the horror of this fearful quire
Consists the music of this doleful place ;
All pleasant birds their tunes from thence retire,
Where none but heavy notes have any grace.

Robert Southwell

Resort there is of none but pilgrim-wights,
That pass with trembling foot and panting heart ;
With terror cast in cold and shuddering frights,
They judge the place to terror framed by art.

Yet Nature's work it is, by art untouched ;
So strait indeed, so vast unto the eye,
With such disordered order strangely couched,
And so, with pleasing horror, low and high,—

That who it views must needs remain aghast,
Much at the work, more at the Maker's might ;
And muse how Nature such a plot could cast,
Where nothing seemèd wrong, yet nothing right.

A place for mated minds, an only bower
Where every thing doth soothe a pensive mood ;
Earth lies forlorn, the cloudy sky doth lour,
The wind here weeps, here sighs, here cries aloud.

The struggling flood between the marble groans,
Then roaring beats upon the craggy sides ;
A little off, amid the pebble stones,
With bubbling streams and purling noise it glides.

The pines thick set, high grown, and ever green,
Still clothe the place with shade and mourning veil ;
Here gaping cliff, there moss-grown plain is seen ;
Here hope doth spring, and there again doth quail.

Huge massy stones that hang by tickle stay,
Still threaten fall, and seem to hang in fear ;
Some withered trees, ashamed of their decay,
Beset with green, are forced gray coats to wear.

Here crystal springs crept out of secret vein
Straight find some envious hole that hides their
grace ;
Here serèd tufts lament the want of rain,
There thunder-wrack gives terror to the place.

Robert Southwell

All pangs and heavy passions here may find
A thousand motives suited to their griefs,
To feed the sorrows of their troubled mind,
And chase away dame Pleasure's vain reliefs.

To plaining thoughts this vale a rest may be,
To which from worldly joys they may retire,
Where Sorrow springs from water, stone, and tree ;
Where every thing with mourners doth conspire.

Set here, my soul, main streams of tears afloat,
Here all thy sinful foils alone recount,
Of solemn tunes make thou the dolefull'st note,
That to thy ditty's dolor may amount.

When Echo doth repeat thy plaintful cries
Think that the very stones thy sins bewray,
And now accuse thee with their sad replies,
As heaven and earth shall in the later day.

Let former faults be fuel of the fire,
For grief, in limbeck of thy heart, to 'still
Thy pensive thoughts and dumps of thy desire,
And vapour tears up to thy eyes at will.

Let tears to tunes, and pains to plaints be press'd,
And let this be the burden of thy song :
Come, deep Remorse, possess my sinful breast ;
Delights, adieu ! I harbour'd you too long.

Upon the Image of Death

BEFORE my face the picture hangs
That daily should put me in mind
Of those cold names and bitter pangs
That shortly I am like to find :
But yet, alas ! full little I
Do think thereon, that I must die.

Robert Southwell

I often look upon a face
Most ugly, grisly, bare and thin ;
I often view the hollow place
Where eyes and nose had sometimes been :
I see the bones across that lie,
Yet little think that I must die.

I read the label underneath,
That telleth me whereto I must ;
I see the sentence eke that saith :
“ Remember, man, that thou art dust.”
But yet, alas ! but seldom I
Do think indeed that I must die.

Continually at my bed's head
A hearse doth hang, which doth me tell
That I ere morning may be dead,
Though now I feel myself full well :
But yet, alas ! for all this, I
Have little mind that I must die.

The gown which I do use to wear,
The knife wherewith I cut my meat,
And eke that old and ancient chair
Which is my only usual seat :
All these do tell me I must die,
And yet my life amend not I.

My ancestors are turned to clay,
And many of my mates are gone ;
My youngers daily drop away,
And can I think to 'scape alone ?
No, no, I know that I must die,
And yet my life amend not I.

Not Solomon, for all his wit,
Nor Samson, though he were so strong,
No king nor person ever yet
Could 'scape, but Death laid him along :
Wherefore I know that I must die,
And yet my life amend not I.

Robert Southwell

Though all the East did quake to hear
Of Alexander's dreadful name,
And all the West did likewise fear
To hear of Julius Cæsar's fame,
Yet both by Death in dust now lie ;
Who then can 'scape, but he must die ?

If none can 'scape Death's dreadful dart ;
If rich and poor his beck obey ;
If strong, if wise, if all do smart,
Then I to 'scape shall have no way.
Oh ! grant me grace, O God ! that I
My life may mend, sith I must die.

Life is but Loss

BY force I live, in will I wish to die ;
In plaint I pass the length of ling'ring days ;
Free would my soul from mortal body fly
And tread the track of death's desired ways :
Life is but loss where death is deemèd gain,
And loathèd pleasures breed displeasing pain.

Who would not die to kill all murd'ring griefs ?
Or who would live in never-dying fears ?
Who would not wish his treasure safe from thieves,
And quit his heart from pangs, his eyes from tears ?
Death parteth but two ever-fighting foes,
Whose civil strife doth work our endless woes.

Life is a wand'ring course to doubtful rest,
As oft a cursèd rise to damning leap,
As happy race to win a heavenly crest ;
None being sure what final fruits to reap :
And who can like in such a life to dwell,
Whose ways are strait to heaven, but wide to hell ?

Robert Southwell

Come, cruel death, why ling'rest thou so long ?

What doth withhold thy dint from fatal stroke ?

Now press'd I am, alas ! thou dost me wrong

To let me live, more anger to provoke :

Thy right is had when thou hast stopp'd my breath,

Why shouldst thou stay to work my double death ?

If Saul's attempt in falling on his blade

As lawful were as ethe to put in ure ;¹

If Samson's leave a common law were made ;

Of Abel's lot if all that would were sure ;

Then, cruel Death, thou shouldst the tyrant play

With none but such as wishèd for delay.

Where life is loved thou ready art to kill,

And to abridge with sudden pangs their joy ;

Where life is loath'd thou wilt not work their will,

But dost adjourn their death to their annoy.

To some thou art a fierce unbidden guest ;

But those that crave thy help thou helpest least.

Avaunt, O viper ! I thy spite defy ;

There is a God that overrules thy force,

Who can thy weapons to His will apply,

And shorten or prolong our brittle course :

I on His mercy, not thy might rely ;

To Him I live, for Him I hope to die.

¹ As lawful as it were easy to put in practice.

Henry Constable

The Shepherd's Song of Venus and Adonis

VENUS fair did ride, Silver doves they drew her,
By the pleasant lawnds Ere the sun did rise ;
Vesta's beauty rich Opened wide to view her,
Philomel records Pleasing harmonies.

Every bird of spring Cheerfully did sing,
Paphos' goddess they salute ;
Now Love's queen so fair, Had of mirth no care,
For her son had made her mute.
In her breast so tender He a shaft did enter,
When her eyes beheld a boy ;
Adonis was he named, By his mother shamed,
Yet he now is Venus' joy.

Him alone she met, Ready bound for hunting,
Him she kindly greets, And his journey stays ;
Him she seeks to kiss No devices wanting,
Him her eyes still woo, Him her tongue still prays.
He with blushing red Hangeth down the head
Not a kiss can he afford ;
His face is turn'd away, Silence said her nay,
Still she woo'd him for a word.
"Speak," she said, "thou fairest, Beauty thou
impairest ;
See me, I am pale and wan.
Lovers all adore me, I for love implore thee" ;
Crystal tears with that down ran.

Henry Constable

Him herewith she forced To come sit down by her,
She his neck embracèd, Gazing in his face ;
He, like one transform'd, Stirr'd no look to eye her,
Every herb did woo him Growing in that place.
Each bird with a ditty, Prayèd him for pity

 In behalf of Beauty's queen ;
Waters' gentle murmur Cravèd him to love her,
 Yet no liking could be seen.

" Boy," she said, " look on me ; Still I gaze upon
 thee ;

 Speak, I pray thee, my delight !"
Coldly he replied, And in brief denied
 To bestow on her a sight.

" I am now too young To be won by beauty,
Tender are my years, I am yet a bud."

" Fair thou art," she said, " Then it is thy duty,
Wert thou but a blossom, To effect my good.

Every beauteous flower Boasteth in my power,
 Birds and beasts my laws effect ;

Myrrha, thy fair mother, Most of any other
 Did my lovely hests respect.

Be with me delighted, Thou shalt be requited,
 Every nymph on thee shall tend ;

All the gods shall love thee, Man shall not reprove
 thee,

 Love himself shall be thy friend."

" Wend thee from me, Venus ; I am not disposèd ;
Thou wring'st me too hard ; Prithee, let me go.

Fie, what a pain it is Thus to be enclosèd !

If love begin with labour, It will end in woe."

" Kiss me, I will leave." " Here a kiss receive."

 "A short kiss I do it find.

Wilt thou leave me so ? Yet thou shalt not go.

 Breathe once more thy balmy wind ;
It smelleth of the myrrh-tree, That to the world did
 bring thee ;

 Never was perfume so sweet."
When she had thus spoken, She gave him a token,
 And their naked bosoms meet.

Henry Constable

"Now," he said, "let's go. Hark, the hounds are crying !

Grisly boar is up ; Huntsmen follow fast."

At the name of boar, Venus seemèd dying,

Deadly coloured pale, Roses overcast.

"Speak," said she, "no more Of following the boar,
Thou, unfit for such a chase.

Course the fearful hare, Venison do not spare.

If thou wilt yield Venus grace,

Shun the boar, I pray thee, Else I still will stay
thee."

Herein he vowed to please her mind.

Then her arms enlargèd, Loth she him dischargèd ;

Forth he went as swift as wind.

Thetis Phœbus' steeds In the west retained,

Hunting-sport was past, Love her love did seek.

Sight of him too soon, Gentle queen, she gained ;

On the ground he lay, Blood had left his cheek.

For an orped swine Smit him in the groin ;

Deadly wound his death did bring.

Which when Venus found, She fell in a swoond,

And, awaked, her hands did wring.

Nymphs and satyrs skipping, Came together trip-
ping,

Echo every cry express'd ;

Venus by her power Turn'd him to a flower,

Which she weareth in her crest.

Henry Constable

A Pastoral Song between Phyllis and Amaryllis, Two Nymphs, each answering other line for line.

FIE on the sleights that men devise,
Heigho, silly sleights !
When simple maids they would entice,
Maids are young men's chief delights.
Nay, women they witch with their eyes,
Eyes like beams of burning sun,
And men once caught, they soon despise,
So are shepherds oft undone.

If any young man win a maid,
Happy man is he ;
By trusting him she is betray'd,
Fie upon such treachery !
If maids win young men with their guiles,
Heigho, guileful grief !
They deal like weeping crocodiles,
That murder men without relief.

I know a simple country hind,
Heigho, silly swain !
To whom fair Daphne proved unkind :
Was he not kind to her again ?
He vowed by Pan with many an oath,
Heigho, shepherd's god is he !
Yet since hath changed and broke his troth,
Troth-plight broke will plaguèd be.

Henry Constable

She had deceived many a swain,
Fie on false deceit !
And plighted troth to them in vain,
There can be no grief more great.
Her measure was with measure paid,
Heigho, heigho, equal meed !
She was beguiled that had betray'd,
So shall deceivers speed.

If every maid were like to me,
Heigho, hard of heart !
Both love and lovers scorn'd should be,
Scorners shall be sure of smart.
If every maid were of my mind,
Heigho, heigho, lovely sweet !
They to their lovers should prove kind,
Kindness is for maidens meet.

Methinks, love is an idle toy,
Heigho, busy pain !
Both wit and sense it doth annoy,
Both sense and wit thereby we gain.
Tush, Phyllis, cease ! be not so coy,
Heigho, heigho, coy disdain !
I know you love a shepherd's boy,
Fie that maidens so should feign.

Well, Amaryllis, now I yield,
Shepherds, pipe aloud !
Love conquers both in town and field,
Like a tyrant fierce and proud.
The evening star is up, ye see,
Vesper shines, we must away ;
Would every lover might agree !
So we end our roundelay.

Henry Constable

Damelus' Song to his Diaphenia

DIAPHENIA, like the daffadowndilly,
White as the sun, fair as the lily,
 Heigho, how I do love thee !
I do love thee as my lambs
Are belovèd of their dams :
 How blest were I if thou wouldst prove me !

Diaphenia, like the spreading roses,
That in thy sweets all sweets encloses,
 Fair sweet, how I do love thee !
I do love thee as each flower
Loves the sun's life-giving power ;
 For dead, thy breath to life might move me.

Diaphenia, like to all things blessèd,
When all thy praises are expressèd,
 Dear joy, how I do love thee !
As the birds do love the Spring,
Or the bees their careful king :
 Then in requite, sweet virgin, love me !

To his Flocks

FEED on, my flocks, securely,
Your shepherd watcheth surely :
Run about, my little lambs,
Skip and wanton with your dams,
 Your loving herd with care will tend ye.
Sport on, fair flocks, at pleasure,
Nip Vesta's flow'ring treasure ;
I myself will duly hark,
When my watchful dog doth bark ;
 From wolf and fox I will defend ye.

Henry Constable

Of his mistress: upon occasion of her walking in a Garden

My lady's presence makes the roses red,
Because to see her lips they blush for shame :
The lilies' leaves, for envy, pale became,
And her white hands in them this envy bred.
The marigold abroad her leaves doth spread,
Because the sun's and her power is the same ;
The violet of purple colour came,
Dyed with the blood she made my heart to shed.
In brief—all flowers from her their virtue take :
From her sweet breath their sweet smells do proceed,
The living heat which her eye-beams do make
Warmeth the ground, and quickeneth the seed.
The rain wherewith she watereth these flowers
Falls from mine eyes, which she dissolves in showers.

IF true love might true love's reward obtain,
Dumb wonder only could speak of my joy ;
But too much worth hath made thee too much coy,
And told me long ago—I loved in vain.
Not then vain hope of undeservèd gain
Hath made me paint in verses mine annoy,
But for thy pleasure ; that thou might'st enjoy
Thy beauties' sight, in glasses of my pain.
See then thy self, though me thou wilt not hear,
By looking on my verse : for pain in verse
Love doth in pain, beauty in love appear.
So, if thou would'st my verses' meaning see,
Exound them thus : When I my love rehearse,
None loves like him ;—that is, none fair like me.

Henry Constable

LADY ! in beauty and in favour rare,
Of favour, not of due, I favour crave :
Nature to thee beauty and favour gave,
Fair then thou art, and favour thou may'st spare.
And when on me bestowed your favours are,
Less favour in your face you shall not have :
If favour then a wounded soul may save,
Of murder's guilt, dear lady, then beware,
My loss of life a million-fold were less
Than the least loss should unto you befall ;
Yet grant this gift : which gift when I possess,
Both I have life, and you no loss at all ;
For by your favour only I do live ;
And favour you may well both keep and give.

WONDER it is, and pity is't, that she
In whom all Beauty's treasure we may find,
That may enrich the body and the mind,
Towards the poor should use no charity.
My love is gone a-begging unto thee ;
And if that Beauty had not been more kind
Than Pity, long ere this he had been pined ;—
But Beauty is content his food to be.
Oh, pity have, when such poor orphans beg !
Love, nakèd boy, hath nothing on his back ;
And though he wanteth neither arm nor leg,
Yet maimed he is, sith he his sight doth lack.
And yet, though blind, he Beauty can behold,
And yet, though naked, he feels more heat than cold.

PITY refusing my poor love to feed,
A beggar starved for want of help he lies,
And at your mouth, the door of beauty, cries—
That thence some alms of sweet grants may proceed.
But as he waiteth for some almes-deed
A cherry-tree before the door he spies—
“Oh dear !” quoth he, “two cherries may suffice,
Two only, life may save in this my need.”

Henry Constable

But beggars can they naught but cherries eat ?
Pardon my Love, he is a goddess' son,
And never feedeth but on dainty meat,
Else need he not to pine as he hath done :
For only the sweet fruit of this sweet tree
Can give food to my Love, and life to me.

Of his Mistress : upon occasion
of a friend of his
which dissuaded him
from loving

A FRIEND of mine moaning my helpless love,
Hoping, by killing hope, my love to slay ;
“ Let not,” quoth he, “ thy hope thy heart betray,
Impossible it is her heart to move.”
But, sith resolvèd love cannot remove
As long as thy divine perfections stay,
Thy godhead then he sought to take away :—
Dear ! seek revenge, and him a liar prove.
Gods only do impossibilities :
“ Impossible,” saith he, “ thy grace to gain ! ”
Show then the power of thy divinities,
By granting me thy favor to obtain :
So shall thy foe give to himself the lie,
A goddess thou shalt prove, and happy I.

SWEET Hand ! the sweet yet cruel bow thou art
From whence at me five ivory arrows fly ;
So with five wounds at once I wounded lie,
Bearing in breast the print of every dart.
Saint Francis had the like—yet felt no smart,
Where I in living torments never die ;
His wounds were in his hands and feet, where I
All these same helpless wounds feel in my heart.

Henry Constable

Now as Saint Francis (if a saint) am I :
The bow that shot these shafts a relic is,
I mean the Hand—which is the reason why
So many for devotion thee would kiss :
And I thy glove kiss as a thing divine—
Thy arrows' quiver, and thy relics' shrine.

NEEDS must I leave, and yet needs must I love ;
In vain my wit doth paint in verse my woe :
Disdain in thee despair in me doth show
How by my wit I do my folly prove.
All this my heart from love can never move ;
Love is not in my heart, no, lady, no :
My heart is love itself ; till I forego
My heart, I never can my love remove.
How shall I then leave love ? I do intend
Not to crave grace, but yet to wish it still ;
Not to praise thee, but beauty to commend,
And so by beauty's praise, praise thee I will.
For as my heart is love, love not in me,
So beauty thou—beauty is not in thee.

To Our Blessed Lady

SWEET queen ! although thy beauty raise up me
From sight of baser beauties here below ;
Yet let me not rest there, but higher go
To Him, who took His shape from God and thee.
And if thy form in Him more fair I see,
What pleasure from his deity shall flow
By whose fair beams his beauty shineth so,
When I shall it behold eternally !
Then shall my love of pleasure have its fill
When Beauty's self, in whom all pleasure is,
Shall my enamour'd soul embrace and kiss,
And shall new loves and new delights distil
Which from my soul shall gush into my heart,
And through my body flow to every part.

Henry Constable

To Saint Mary Magdalene

SUCH as retired from sight of men, like thee,
By penance seek the joys of heaven to win,
In deserts make their paradise begin,
And even amongst wild beasts do angels see ;
In such a place my soul doth seem to be,
When in my body she laments her sin,
And none but brutal passions finds therein,
Except they be sent down from heaven to me.
Yet if these praises God to me impart,
Which He inspired thy blessed heart withal,
I may find heaven in my retired heart !
And if thou change the object of my love,
The wing'd Affection, which men Cupid call,
May get his sight, and like an angel prove.

To Saint Katharine

BECAUSE thou wast the daughter of a King,
Whose beauty did all Nature's works exceed,
And wisdom wonder to the world did breed,
A muse might rouse itself on Cupid's wing ;
But, sith [the graces] which from nature spring
Were graced by those which from grace did proceed,
And glory [have] deserved, my Muse doth need
An angel's feathers when thy praise I sing.
For all in thee became angelical :
An angel's face had angels' purity,
And thou an angel's tongue didst speak withal ;
Lo ! why thy soul, set free by martyrdom,
Was crowned by God in angels' company,
And angels' hands thy body did entomb.

Henry Constable

To Sir Philip Sidney's Soul

GIVE pardon, blessèd soul, to my bold cries,
If they, importune, interrupt thy song,
Which now with joyful notes thou sing'st among
The angel-quiristers of th' heavenly skies.
Give pardon eke, sweet soul, to my slow eyes
That since I saw thee now it is so long,
And yet the tears that unto thee belong
To thee as yet they did not sacrifice.
I did not know that thou wert dead before ;
I did not feel the grief I did sustain ;
The greater stroke astonisheth the more ;
Astonishment takes from us sense of pain ;
I stood amazed when others' tears begun,
And now begin to weep when they have done.

William Drummond

Song

IT autumn was, and on our hemisphere
Fair Erycine¹ began bright to appear ;
Night westward did her gemmy world decline,
And hide her lights, that greater light might shine ;
The crested bird had given alarum twice
To lazy mortals, to unlock their eyes ;
The owl had left to plain, and from each thorn
The wing'd musicians did salute the morn,
Who, while she glass'd her locks in Ganges' streams,
Set open wide the crystal port of dreams ;
When I, whose eyes no drowsy night could close,
In sleep's soft arms did quietly repose,
And, for that heavens to die me did deny,
Death's image kissed, and as dead did lie.
I lay as dead, but scarce charm'd were my cares,
And slaked scarce my sighs, scarce dried my tears,
Sleep scarce the ugly figures of the day
Had with his sable pencil put away,
And left me in a still and calm mood,
When by my bed methought a virgin stood,
A virgin in the blooming of her prime,
If such rare beauty measur'd be by time.
Her head a garland wore of opals bright,
About her flow'd a gown as pure as light,
Dear amber locks gave umbrage to her face.
Where modesty high majesty did grace ;
Her eyes such beams sent forth, that but with pain
Here weaker sights their sparkling could sustain.

Venus.

William Drummond

No deity feign'd which haunts the silent woods
Is like to her, nor syren of the floods :
Such is the golden planet of the year,
When blushing in the east he doth appear.
Her grace did beauty, voice yet grace did pass,
Which thus through pearls and rubies broken was.

How long wilt thou, said she, estrang'd from joy,
Paint shadows to thyself of false annoy ?
How long thy mind with horrid shapes affright,
And in imaginary evils delight ;
Esteem that loss which, well when view'd, is gain,
Or if a loss, yet not a loss to plain ?
O leave thy tired soul more to molest,
And think that woe when shortest then is best.
If she for whom thou deafnest thus the sky
Be dead, what then ? was she not born to die ?
Was she not mortal born ? If thou dost grieve
That times should be in which she should not live,
Ere e'er she was weep that day's wheel was roll'd,
Weep that she liv'd not in the age of gold ;
For that she was not then, thou may'st deplore
As duly as that now she is no more.
If only she had died, thou sure hadst cause
To blame the destines, and heaven's iron laws ;
But look how many millions her advance,
What numbers with her enter in this dance,
With those which are to come : shall heavens them
stay,

And All's fair order break, thee to obey ?
Even as thy birth, death, which doth thee appal,
A piece is of the life of this great All.
Strong cities die, die do high palmy reigns,
And, weakling, thou thus to be handled plains.

If she be dead, then she of loathsome days
Hath past the line, whose length but loss bewrays ;
Then she hath left this filthy stage of care,
Where pleasure seldom, woe doth still repair :
For all the pleasures which it doth contain,
Not countervail the smallest minute's pain.
And tell me, thou who dost so much admire
This little vapour, smoke, this spark, or fire,

William Drummond

Which life is call'd, what doth it thee bequeath
But some few years which birth draws out to death?
Which if thou paragon with lustres run,
And them whose career is but now begun,
In day's great vast they shall far less appear,
Than with the sea when matched is a tear.
But why wouldst thou here longer wish to be?
One year doth serve all nature's pomp to see,
Nay, even one day and night: this moon, that
sun,

Those lesser fires about this round which run,
Be but the same which, under Saturn's reign,
Did the serpentine seasons interchain.
How oft doth life grow less by living long?
And what excelleth but what dieth young?
For age which all abhor, yet would embrace,
Whiles makes the mind as wrinkled as the face;
And when that destinies conspire with worth,
That years not glory wrong, life soon goes forth.
Leave then laments, and think thou didst not live,
Laws to that first eternal cause to give,
But to obey those laws which he hath given,
And bow unto the just decrees of Heaven,
Which can not err, whatever foggy mists
Do blind men in these sublunary lists.

But what if she for whom thou spend'st those groans,
And wastest life's dear torch in ruthless moans,
She for whose sake thou hat'st the joyful light,
Court'st solitary shades, and irksome night,
Doth live? O! if thou canst, through tears, a space
Lift thy dimm'd lights, and look upon this face,
Look if those eyes which, fool, thou didst adore,
Shine not more bright than they were wont before;
Look if those roses death could aught impair,
Those roses to thee once which seem'd so fair;
And if these locks have lost aught of that gold,
Which erst they had when thou them didst behold.
I live, and happy live, but thou art dead,
And still shalt be, till thou be like me made.
Alas! whilst we are wrapt in gowns of earth,
And blind, here suck the air of woe beneath,

William Drummond

Each thing in sense's balances we weigh,
And but with toil and pain the truth descry.

Above this vast and admirable frame.
This temple visible, which World we name,
Within those walls so many lamps do burn,
So many arches opposite do turn,
Where elemental brethren nurse their strife
And by intestine wars maintain their life,
There is a world, a world of perfect bliss,
Pure, immaterial, bright, more far from this
Than that high circle, which the rest enspheres,
Is from this dull ignoble vale of tears ;
A world, where all is found, that here is found,
But further discrepant than heaven and ground.
It hath an earth, as hath this world of yours,
With creatures peopled, stor'd with trees and flow'rs ;
It hath a sea, like sapphire girdle cast,
Which decketh of harmonious shores the vast ;
It hath pure fire, it hath delicious air,
Moon, sun, and stars, heavens wonderfully fair :
But there flow'rs do not fade, trees grow not old,
The creatures do not die through heat nor cold ;
Sea there not tossed is, nor air made black ;
Fire doth not nurse itself on other's wrack ;
There heavens be not constrain'd about to range,
For this world hath no need of any change ;
The minutes grow not hours, hours rise not days,
Days make no months but ever-blooming Mays.

Here I remain, but hitherward do tend
All who their span of days in virtue spend :
Whatever pleasure this low place contains,
It is a glance but of what high remains.
Those who, perchance, think there can nothing be
Without this wide expansion which they see,
And that nought else mounts stars' circumference,
For that nought else is subject to their sense,
Feel such a case, as one whom some abysm
Of the deep ocean kept had all his time ;
Who born and nourish'd there, can scarcely dream
That ought can live without that briny stream ;
Cannot believe that there be temples, towers,

William Drummond

Which go beyond his caves and dampish bowers,
Or there be other people, manners, laws,
Than them he finds within the roaring waves ;
That sweeter flow'rs do spring than grow on rocks,
Or beasts be which excel the scaly flocks ;
That other elements be to be found,
Than is the water, and this ball of ground.
But think that man from those abysms were brought,
And saw what curious nature here hath wrought,
Did see the meads, the tall and shady woods,
The hills did see, the clear and ambling floods,
The diverse shapes of beasts which kinds forth bring,
The feathered troops, that fly and sweetly sing ;
Did see the palaces, the cities fair,
The form of human life, the fire, the air,
The brightness of the sun that dims his sight,
The moon, the ghastly splendours of the night :
What uncouth rapture would his mind surprise !
How would he his late-dear resort despise !
How would he muse how foolish he had been
To think nought be, but what he there had seen !
Why did we get this high and vast desire,
Unto immortal things still to aspire ?
Why doth our mind extend it beyond time,
And to that highest happiness even climb,
If we be nought but what to sense we seem,
And dust, as most of worldlings us esteem ?
We be not made for earth, though here we come,
More than the embryo for the mother's womb ;
It weeps to be made free, and we complain
To leave this loathsome jail of care and pain.

But thou who vulgar footsteps dost not trace,
Learn to raise up thy mind unto this place,
And what earth-creeping mortals most affect,
If not at all to scorn, yet to neglect :
O chase not shadows vain, which, when obtain'd,
Were better lost, than with such travail gain'd.
Think that on earth, which humans greatness call,
Is but a glorious title to live thrall ;
That sceptres, diadems, and chairs of state,
Not in themselves, but to small minds are great ;

William Drummond

How those who loftiest mount do hardest light.
And deepest falls be from the highest height ;
How fame an echo is, how all renown,
Like to a blasted rose, ere night falls down ;
And though it something were, think how this round
Is but a little point, which doth it bound.
O leave that love which reacheth but to dust,
And in that love eternal only trust,
And beauty, which, when once it is possest,
Can only fill the soul, and make it blest.
Pale envy, jealous emulations, fears,
Sighs, plaints, remorse, here have no place, nor tears ;
False joys, vain hopes, here be not, hate nor wrath ;
What ends all love, here most augments it, death.
If such force had the dim glance of an eye,
Which some few days thereafter was to die,
That it could make thee leave all other things,
And like the taper-fly there burn thy wings ;
And if a voice, of late which could but wail,
Such pow'r had, as through ears thy soul to steal ;
If once thou on that only Fair couldst gaze,
What flames of love would he within thee raise !
In what a mazing maze would it thee bring,
To hear but once that quire celestial sing !
The fairest shapes on which thy love did seize,
Which erst did breed delight, then would displease,
Then discords hoarse were earth's enticing sounds,
All music but a noise which sense confounds.
This great and burning glass that clears all eyes,
And musters with such glory in the skies ;
That silver star which with its sober light
Makes day oft envy the eye-pleasing night ;
Those golden letters which so brightly shine
In heaven's great volume gorgeously divine ;
The wonders all in sea, in earth, in air,
Be but dark pictures of that sovereign Fair ;
Be tongues, which still thus cry unto your ear,
(Could ye amidst world's cataracts them hear,)
From fading things, fond wights, lift your desire
And in our beauty, his, us made, admire :
If we seem fair, O think how fair is he

William Drummond

Of whose fair fairness shadows, steps, we be.
No shadow can compare it with the face,
No step with that dear foot which did it trace ;
Your souls immortal are, then place them hence,
And do not drown them in the must of sense :
Do not, O do not, by false pleasures' might
Deprive them of that true and sole delight.
That happiness ye seek is not below ;
Earth's sweetest joy is but disguised woe.

Here did she pause, and with a mild aspect
Did towards me those laming twins direct ;
The wonted rays I knew, and thrice essay'd
To answer make, thrice falt'ring tongue it stay'd ;
And while upon that face I fed my sight,
Methought she vanish'd up in Titan's light,
Who gilding with his rays each hill and plain,
Seem'd to have brought the golden world again.

Song

PHŒBUS, arise !
And paint the sable skies
With azure, white, and red ;
Rouse Memnon's mother from her Tithon's bed,
That she may thy career with roses spread ;
The nightingales thy coming each-where sing ;
Make an eternal Spring,
Give life to this dark world which lieth dead ;
Spread forth thy golden hair
In larger locks than thou wast wont before,
And emperor-like, decore
With diadem of pearl thy temples fair :
Chase hence the ugly night,
Which serves but to make dear thy glorious light.
—This is that happy morn,
That day, long-wishèd day,
Of all my life so dark
(If cruel stars have not my ruin sworn,

William Drummond

And fates not hope betray),
Which, only white, deserves
An everlasting diamond should it mark :
This is the morn should bring unto this grove
My Love, to hear and recompense my love.
Fair King, who all preserves,
But show thy blushing beams,
And thou two sweeter eyes
Shalt see, than those which by Penèus' streams
Did once thy heart surprise ;
Nay, suns, which shine as clear
As thou when two thou did to Rome appear.
Now, Flora, deck thyself in fairest guise ;
If that ye, winds, would hear
A voice surpassing far Amphion's lyre,
Your stormy chiding stay ;
Let Zephyr only breathe,
And with her tresses play,
Kissing sometimes those purple ports of death.
—The winds all silent are,
And Phœbus in his chair,
Ensaffroning sea and air,
Makes vanish every star :
Night like a drunkard reels
Beyond the hills to shun his flaming wheels ;
The fields with flowers are deck'd in every hue,
The clouds bespangle with bright gold their blue :
Here is the pleasant place,
And every thing, save her, who all should grace.

I KNOW that all beneath the moon decays,
And what by mortals in this world is brought,
In Time's great periods shall return to nought ;
That fairest states have fatal nights and days :
I know how all the Muse's heavenly lays,
With toil of spright which are so dearly bought,
As idle sounds, of few or none are sought,
And that nought lighter is than airy praise ;
I know frail beauty like the purple flower,
To which one morn oft birth and death affords ;

William Drummond

That love a jarring is of minds' accords,
Where sense and will invassal reason's power :
 Know what I list, this all can not me move,
 But that, O me ! I both must write and love.

Now while the Night her sable veil hath spread,
And silently her resty coach doth roll,
Rousing with her from Tethys' azure bed
Those starry nymphs which dance about the pole ;
While Cynthia, in purest cypress clad,
The Latmian shepherd in a trance describes,
And whiles looks pale from height of all the skies,
While dyes her beauties in a bashful red ;
While Sleep, in triumph, closed hath all eyes,
And birds and beasts a silence sweet do keep,
And Proteus' monstrous people in the deep,
The winds and waves, husht up, to rest entice ;
 I wake, muse, weep, and who my heart hath slain
 See still before me to augment my pain.

SLEEP, Silence' child, sweet father of soft rest,
Prince, whose approach peace to all mortals brings,
Indifferent host to shepherds and to kings,
Sole comforter of minds with grief opprest ;
Lo, by thy charming rod all breathing things
Lie slumb'ring, with forgetfulness possest,
And yet o'er me to spread thy drowsy wings
Thou spares, alas ! who cannot be thy guest.
Since I am thine, O come, but with that face
To inward light which thou art wont to show,
With feignèd solace ease a true-felt woe ;
Or if, deaf god, thou do deny that grace,
 Come as thou wilt, and what thou wilt bequeath,—
 I long to kiss the image of my death.

AH ! burning thoughts, now let me take some rest,
And your tumultuous broils a while appease ;
Is't not enough, stars, fortune, love molest
Me all at once, but ye must too displease ?

William Drummond

Let hope, though false, yet lodge within my breast,
My high attempt, though dangerous, yet praise.
What though I trace not right heaven's steepy ways ?
It doth suffice, my fall shall make me blest.
I do not doat on days, nor fear not death ;
So that my life be brave, what though not long ?
Let me renown'd live from the vulgar throng,
And when ye list, Heavens ! take this borrowed breath.
Men but like visions are, time all doth claim ;
He lives, who dies to win a lasting name.

WITH flaming horns the Bull now brings the year,
Melt do the horrid mountains' helms of snow,
The silver floods in pearly channels flow,
The late bare-woods green anadems do wear :
The nightingale, forgetting winter's woe,
Calls up the lazy morn her notes to hear ;
Those flow'rs are spread which names of princes bear,
Some red, some azure, white and golden grow ;
Here lows a heifer, there bea-wailing strays
A harmless lamb, not far a stag rebounds ;
The shepherds sing to grazing flocks sweet lays,
And all about the echoing air resounds.
Hills, dales, woods, floods, and everything doth
change,
But she in rigour, I in love am strange.

To the delightful green
Of you, fair radiant eyne,
Let each black yield beneath the starry arch.
Eyes, burnish'd Heavens of love,
Sinople lamps of Jove,
Save that those hearts which with your flames ye parch
Two burning suns you prove,
All other eyes compar'd with you, dear lights,
Be Hells, or if not Hells, yet dumpish nights.
The Heavens, if we their glass
The sea believe, be green, not perfect blue :
They all make fair what every fair yet was,
And they be fair because they look like you.

William Drummond

IN vain I haunt the cold and silver springs,
To quench the fever burning in my veins ;
In vain, love's pilgrim, mountains, dales, and plains,
I overrun ; vain help long absence brings :
In vain, my friends, your counsel me constrains
To fly, and place my thoughts on other things.
Ah ! like the bird that fired hath her wings,
The more I move, the greater are my pains.
Desire, alas ! Desire, a Zeuxis new,
From Indies borrowing gold, from western skies
Most bright cinoper, sets before mine eyes
In every place, her hair, sweet look, and hue :
That fly, run, rest I, all doth prove but vain,
My life lies in those looks which have me slain.

LIKE the Idalian queen,
Her hair about her eyne,
With neck and breast's ripe apples to be seen,
At first glance of the morn,
In Cyprus' gardens gathering those fair flow'rs
Which of her blood were born,
I saw, but fainting saw, my paramours.
The Graces naked danc'd about the place,
The winds and trees amaz'd
With silence on her gaz'd ;
The flow'rs did smile, like those upon her face,
And as their aspen stalks those fingers band,
That she might read my case,
A hyacinth I wish'd me in her hand.

DEAR chorister, who from those shadows sends,
Ere that the blushing Dawn dare show her light,
Such sad lamenting strains, that night attends
(Become all ear), stars stay to hear thy plight ;
If one whose grief even reach of thought transcends,
Who ne'er (not in a dream) did taste delight,
May thee importune who like case pretends,
And seems to joy in woe, in woe's despite ;

William Drummond

Tell me (so may thou fortune milder try,
And long, long sing) for what thou thus complains,
Sith, winter gone, the sun in dappled sky
Now smiles on meadows, mountains, woods, and
 plains?

 The bird, as if my questions did her move,
With trembling wings sobb'd forth, I love, I love !

TRUST not, sweet soul, those curlèd waves of gold,
With gentle tides which on your temples flow,
Nor temples spread with flakes of virgin snow,
Nor snow of cheeks with Tyrian grain enroll'd ;
Trust not those shining lights which wrought my
 woe,

When first I did their burning rays behold,
Nor voice, whose sounds more strange effects do show
Than of the Thracian harper have been told.

Look to this dying lily, fading rose,
Dark hyacinth, of late whose blushing beams
Made all the neighbouring herbs and grass rejoice,
And think how little is 'twixt life's extremes :

 The cruel tyrant that did kill those flow'rs,
Shall once, ay me ! not spare that spring of yours.

If crost with all mishaps be my poor life,
If one short day I never spent in mirth,
If my spright with itself holds lasting strife,
If sorrow's death is but new sorrow's birth ;
If this vain world be but a sable stage
Where slave-born man plays to the scoffing stars,
If youth be toss'd with love, with weakness age,
If knowledge serve to hold our thoughts in wars ;
If time can close the hundred mouths of fame,
And make, what long since past, like that to be,
If virtue only be an idle name,

If I, when I was born, was born to die ;
 Why seek I to prolong these loathsome days ?
The fairest rose in shortest time decays.

William Drummond

THE sun is fair when he with crimson crown,
And flaming rubies, leaves his eastern bed ;
Fair is Thaumantias in her crystal gown,
When clouds engemm'd hang azure, green, and red :
To western worlds when wearied day goes down,
And from Heaven's windows each star shows her head,
Earth's silent daughter, night, is fair, though brown ;
Fair is the moon, though in love's livery clad ;
Fair Chloris is when she doth paint April,
Fair are the meads, the woods, the floods are fair ;
Fair looketh Ceres with her yellow hair,
And apples' queen when rose-cheek'd she doth smile.
That heaven, and earth, and seas are fair is true,
Yet true that all not please so much as you.

SWEET rose, whence is this hue
Which doth all hues excel ?
Whence this most fragrant smell,
And whence this form and gracing grace in you ?
In flow'ry Pæstum's field perhaps ye grew,
Or Hybla's hills you bred,
Or odoriferous Enna's plains you fed,
Or Tmolus, or where boar young Adon slew ;
Or hath the queen of love you dy'd of new
In that dear blood, which makes you look so red ?
No, none of those, but cause more high you blest,
My lady's breast you bare, and lips you kiss'd.

DEAR wood, and you, sweet solitary place,
Where from the vulgar I estrangèd live,
Contented more with what your shades me give,
Than if I had what Thetis doth embrace ;
What snaky eye, grown jealous of my peace,
Now from your silent horrors would me drive,
When Sun, progressing in his glorious race
Beyond the Twins, doth near our pole arrive ?
What sweet delight a quiet life affords,
And what it is to be of bondage free,

William Drummond

Far from the madding worldling's hoarse discords,
Sweet flow'ry place, I first did learn of thee :

Ah ! if I were mine own, your dear resorts
I would not change with princes' stately courts.

ALEXIS, here she stay'd ; among these pines,
Sweet hermitress, she did alone repair ;
Here did she spread the treasure of her hair,
More rich than that brought from the Colchian mines ;
She set her by these muskèd eglantines,
The happy place the print seems yet to bear ;
Her voice did sweeten here thy sugar'd lines,
To which winds, trees, beasts, birds, did lend their ear.
Me here she first perceiv'd, and here a morn
Of bright carnations did o'erspread her face ;
Here did she sigh, here first my hopes were born,
And I first got a pledge of promis'd grace :

But, ah ! what serv'd it to be happy so,
Sith passèd pleasures double but new woe ?

I FEAR not henceforth death,
Sith after this departure yet I breathe ;
Let rocks, and seas, and wind,
Their highest treasons show ;
Let sky and earth combin'd
Strive, if they can, to end my life and woe ;
Sith grief can not, me nothing can o'erthrow :
Or if that aught can cause my fatal lot,
It will be when I hear I am forgot.

THIS Life, which seems so fair,
Is like a bubble blown up in the air
By sporting children's breath,
Who chase it everywhere,
And strive who can most motion it bequeath :
And though it sometime seem of its own might,
Like to an eye of gold, to be fix'd there,
And firm to hover in that empty height,

William Drummond

That only is because it is so light.
But in that pomp it doth not long appear ;
For even when most admired, it in a thought,
As swelled from nothing, doth dissolve in nought.

My lute, be as thou wast when thou didst grow
With thy green mother in some shady grove,
When immelodious winds but made thee move,
And birds on thee their ramage did bestow.
Sith that dear Voice which did thy sounds approve,
Which us'd in such harmonious strains to flow,
Is reft from Earth to tune those spheres above,
What art thou but a harbinger of woe ?
Thy pleasing notes be pleasing notes no more,
But orphan wailings to the fainting ear,
Each stop a sigh, each sound draws forth a tear :
Be therefore silent as in woods before,
Or if that any hand to touch thee deign,
Like widow'd turtle, still her loss complain.

SWEET Spring, thou turn'st with all thy goodly
train,
Thy head with flames, thy mantle bright with
flow'rs :
The zephyrs curl the green locks of the plain,
The clouds for joy in pearls weep down their show'rs.
Thou turn'st, sweet youth, but, ah ! my pleasant
hours
And happy days with thee come not again ;
The sad memorials only of my pain
Do with thee turn, which turn my sweets in sours.
Thou art the same which still thou wast before,
Delicious, wanton, amiable, fair ;
But she, whose breath embalm'd thy wholesome air,
Is gone ; nor gold, nor gems, her can restore.
Neglected Virtue, seasons go and come,
While thine, forgot, lie closed in a tomb.

William Drummond

WHAT doth it serve to see Sun's burning face,
And skies enamell'd with both the Indies' gold,
Or moon at night in jetty chariot roll'd,
And all the glory of that starry place ?
What doth it serve earth's beauty to behold,
The mountains' pride, the meadows' flow'ry grace,
The stately comeliness of forests old,
The sport of floods, which would themselves embrace ?
What doth it serve to hear the Sylvans' songs,
The wanton merle, the nightingale's sad strains,
Which in dark shades seem to deplore my wrongs ?
For what doth serve all that this world contains,
Sith she for whom those once to me were dear,
No part of them can have now with me here ?

THE beauty, and the life
Of life's and beauty's fairest paragon,
O tears ! O grief ! hung at a feeble thread,
To which pale Atropos had set her knife ;
The soul with many a groan
Had left each outward part,
And now did take his last leave of the heart ;
Nought else did want, save death, even to be dead ;
When the afflicted band about her bed,
Seeing so fair him come in lips, cheeks, eyes,
Cried, ah ! and can death enter paradise ?

My thoughts hold mortal strife ;
I do detest my life,
And with lamenting cries,
Peace to my soul to bring,
Oft call that prince which here doth monarchize ;
But he, grim-grinning King,
Who caitiffs scorns, and doth the blest surprise,
Late having deckt with beauty's rose his tomb,
Disdains to crop a weed, and will not come.

William Drummond

Of Phillis

IN petticoat of green,
Her hair about her eyne,
Phillis beneath an oak
Sat milking her fair flock :
Among that strained moisture, rare delight !
Her hand seem'd milk in milk, it was so white.

A Kiss

HARK, happy lovers, hark,
This first and last of joys,
This sweet'ner of annoys,
This nectar of the gods
Ye call a kiss, is with itself at odds ;
And half so sweet is not
In equal measure got
At light of sun, as it is in the dark :
Hark, happy lovers, hark.

Armeline's Epitaph

NEAR to this eglantine
Enclosed lies the milk-white Armeline,
Once Chloris' only joy,
Now only her annoy ;
Who envied was of the most happy swains
That keep their flocks in mountains, dales, or plains ;
For oft she bare the wanton in her arm,
And oft her bed and bosom did he warm :
Now when unkindly Fates did him destroy,
Blest dog, he had the grace,
With tears for him that Chloris wet her face.

William Drummond

The Book of the World

OF this fair volume which we World do name,
If we the sheets and leaves could turn with care,
Of him who it corrects, and did it frame,
We clear might read the art and wisdom rare ;
Find out his power which wildest pow'rs doth tame,
His providence extending everywhere,
His justice which proud rebels doth not spare,
In every page, no, period of the same,
But silly we, like foolish children, rest
Well pleas'd with colour'd vellum, leaves of gold,
Fair dangling ribbons, leaving what is best,
On the great writer's sense ne'er taking hold ;
Or if by chance our minds do muse on ought,
It is some picture on the margin wrought.

For the Baptist

THE last and greatest Herald of Heaven's King,
Girt with rough skins, hies to the deserts wild,
Among that savage brood the woods forth bring,
Which he than man more harmless found and mild :
His food was locusts, and what young doth spring,
With honey that from virgin hives distill'd ;
Parch'd body, hollow eyes, some uncouth thing
Made him appear, long since from earth exil'd.
There burst he forth : " All ye, whose hopes rely
On God, with me amidst these deserts mourn ?
Repent, repent, and from old errors turn."
Who listen'd to his voice, obey'd his cry ?
Only the echoes, which he made relent,
Rung from their marble caves, " Repent, repent ! "

William Drummond

For the Magdalene

THESE eyes, dear Lord, once brandons of desire,
Frail scouts betraying what they had to keep,
Which their own heart, then others set on fire,
Their trait'rous black before thee here out-weep :
These locks, of blushing deeds the fair attire,
Smooth-frizzled waves, sad shelves which shadow
 deep,
Soul-stinging serpents in gilt curls which creep,
To touch thy sacred feet do now aspire.
In seas of care behold a sinking bark,
By winds of sharp remorse unto thee driven,
O ! let me not expos'd be ruin's mark ;
My faults confest, Lord, say they are forgiven.
 Thus sigh'd to Jesus the Bethanian fair,
 His tear-wet feet still drying with her hair.

Faith above Reason

SOUL, which to hell wast thrall,
He, he for thine offence
Did suffer death, who could not die at all.
O sovereign excellence,
O life of all that lives,
Eternal bounty which each good thing gives,
How could death mount so high ?
No wit this height can reach ;
Faith only doth us teach,
For us he died, at all who could not die.

William Drummond

Man's Knowledge, Ignorance in the Mysteries of God

BENEATH a sable veil and shadows deep
Of unaccessible and dimming light,
In silence' ebon clouds more black than night,
The world's great King his secrets hid doth keep :
Through those thick mists, when any mortal wight
Aspires, with halting pace and eyes that weep,
To pore, and in his mysteries to creep,
With thunders he and lightnings blasts their sight.
O Sun invisible, that dost abide
Within thy bright abysms, most fair, most dark,
Where with thy proper rays thou dost thee hide !
O ever-shining, never full-seen mark !
To guide me in life's night thy light me show,
The more I search of thee, the less I know.

Contemplation of Invisible Excellencies Above, by the Visible Below

IF with such passing beauty, choice delights,
The architect of this great round did frame
This palace visible (short lists of fame,
And silly mansion but of dying wights),
How many wonders, what amazing lights
Must that triumphing seat of glory claim,
That doth transcend all this great All's vast heights,
Of whose bright sun ours here is but a beam !
O blest abode ! O happy dwelling-place,
Where visibly th' Invisible doth reign !

William Drummond

Blest people which do see true beauty's face,
With whose far dawns scarce he earth doth deign !
All joy is but annoy, all concord strife,
Match'd with your endless bliss and happy life.

The World a Game

THIS world a hunting is,
The prey poor man, the Nimrod fierce is Death ;
His speedy greyhounds are
Lust, sickness, envy, care,
Strife that ne'er falls amiss,
With all those ills which haunt us while we breathe.
Now, if by chance we fly
Of these the eager chase,
Old age with stealing pace
Casts up his nets, and there we panting die.

Against Hypocrisy

AS are those apples, pleasant to the eye,
But full of smoke within, which use to grow
Near that strange lake, where God pour'd from the
sky
Huge showers of flames, worse flames to overthrow ;
Such are their works that with a glaring show
Of humble holiness, in virtue's dye
Would colour mischief, while within they glow
With coals of sin, though none the smoke descry.
Ill is that angel which erst fell from heaven,
But not more ill than he, nor in worse case,
Who hides a trait'rous mind with smiling face,
And with a dove's white feathers masks a raven.
Each sin some colour hath it to adorn,
Hypocrisy almighty God doth scorn.

William Drummond

Change should Breed Change

NEW doth the sun appear,
The mountains' snows decay,
Crown'd with frail flowers forth comes the baby year.
My soul, time posts away,
And thou yet in that frost
Which flower and fruit hath lost,
As if all here immortal were, dost stay :
For shame ! thy powers awake,
Look to that heaven which never night makes black,
And there, at that immortal sun's bright rays,
Deck thee with flowers which fear not rage of days.

The Praise of a Solitary Life

THRICE happy he, who by some shady grove,
Far from the clamorous world, doth live his own ;
Though solitary, who is not alone,
But doth converse with that Eternal Love.
O how more sweet is birds' harmonious moan,
Or the hoarse sobbings of the widow'd dove,
Than those smooth whisperings near a prince's throne,
Which good make doubtful, do the evil approve !
O how more sweet is Zephyr's wholesome breath,
And sighs embalm'd, which new-born flowers unfold,
Than that applause vain honour doth bequeath !
How sweet are streams to poison drunk in gold !
The world is full of horrors, troubles, slights,
Woods' harmless shades have only true delights.

William Drummond

To a Nightingale

SWEET bird, that sing'st away the early hours,
Of winters past or coming void of care,
Well pleasèd with delights which present are,
Fair seasons, budding sprays, sweet-smelling flowers ;
To rocks, to springs, to rills, from leafy bowers
Thou thy Creator's goodness dost declare,
And what dear gifts on thee he did not spare,
A stain to human sense in sin that lowers.
What soul can be so sick which by thy songs,
Attir'd in sweetness, sweetly is not driven
Quite to forget earth's turmoils, spites, and wrongs,
And lift a reverent eye and thought to heaven !
Sweet artless songster, thou my mind dost raise
To airs of spheres, yes, and to angels' lays.

Content and Resolute

As when it happ'neth that some lovely town
Unto a barbarous besieger falls,
Who there by sword and flame himself instals,
And, cruel, it in tears and blood doth drown ;
Her beauty spoiled, her citizens made thralls,
His spite yet so cannot her all throw down,
But that some statue, arch, fane of renown
Yet lurks unmaimed within her weeping walls :
So, after all the spoil, disgrace, and wrack,
That time, the world, and death could bring combined,
Amidst that mass of ruins they did make,
Safe from all scarless yet remains my mind :
From this so high transcending rapture springs,
That I, all else defaced, not envy kings.

William Drummond

Death's Last Will

MORE oft than once Death whisper'd in mine ear,
Grave what thou hears in diamond and gold,
I am that monarch whom all monarchs fear,
Who hath in dust their far-stretch'd pride uproll'd ;
All, all is mine beneath moon's silver sphere,
And nought, save virtue, can my power withhold :
This, not believ'd, experience true thee told,
By danger late when I to thee came near.
As bugbear then my visage I did show,
That of my horrors thou right use might'st make,
And a more sacred path of living take :
Now still walk armed for my ruthless blow,
Trust flattering life no more, redeem time past,
And live each day as if it were thy last.

DOETH then the world go thus, doth all thus move ?
Is this the justice which on earth we find ?
Is this that firm decree which all doth bind ?
Are these your influences, Powers above ?
Those souls which vice's moody mists most blind,
Blind Fortune blindly most their friend doth prove ;
And they who thee, poor idol, Virtue, love,
Ply like a feather tossed by storm and wind.
Ah ! if a Providence doth sway this All,
Why should best minds groan under most distress ?
Or why should pride humility make thrall,
And injuries the innocent oppress ?
Heavens ! hinder, stop this fate, or grant a time
When good may have, as well as bad, their prime.

William Drummond

Before a Poem of Irene

MOURN not, fair Greece, the ruin of thy kings,
Thy temples razed, thy forts with flames devoured,
Thy champions slain, thy virgins pure deflowered,
Nor all those griefs which stern Bellona brings :
But mourn, fair Greece, mourn that that sacred band
Which made thee once so famous by their songs,
Forc'd by outrageous Fate, have left thy land,
And left thee scarce a voice to plain thy wrongs ;
Mourn that those climates which to thee appear
Beyond both Phœbus and his sister's ways,
To save thy deeds from death must lend thee lays,
And such as from Musæus thou didst hear ;
For now Irene hath attained such fame,
That Hero's ghost doth weep to hear her name.

Epitaph

FAME, register of time,
Write in thy scroll, that I,
Of wisdom lover, and sweet poesy.
Was cropped in my prime,
And ripe in worth, tho' green in years, did die.

Glossary

cinoper : vermilion.

damning : destructive.

decore : decoration.

gin : snare.

hap : chance.

jesses : foot-straps used for attaching the legs
of a bird to the hand.

lawnds : lawns.

mated : dejected.

orped : stout.

poure : ? purse.

ramage : warbling.

silly : simple.

sinople : green. 48

sith : since.

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